

SUBJECT: NEIB Meeting

Approved For Release 2003/10/22 : CIA-RDP83M00171R002100210001-1

LOG NO.: 7672

DATE OF ITEM: 1-16-80 DATE RECEIVED: 1-16-80

D/PAO COMMENTS:

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DISPOSITION:

FILE: NY30

ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_

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**NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD**

NFIB-2.6/5  
16 January 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD

FROM : Walter Elder  
Secretary

SUBJECT : NFIB Meeting, 22 January 1980

The attached paper is forwarded for use on item No. 2 at the  
NFIB meeting on 22 January 1980.

[REDACTED]  
WALTER ELDER

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Attachment

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WARNING NOTICE  
INTELLIGENCE SOURCES  
AND METHODS INVOLVED

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
National Foreign Assessment Center  
14 January 1980

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Response to Questions on the Soviet  
Brigade in Cuba

1. *What is the status of military conditions in Cuba since our last look?*

We have discerned no significant change in the Soviet motorized rifle brigade or the Cuban military since September 1979.

1a. *How firm can we now be on the brigade's size and mission?*

We cannot be more firm in our estimate of the size and mission of the Soviet brigade than in the judgments expressed in Interagency Intelligence Memorandum: *Updated Report on Soviet Ground Forces Brigade in Cuba*, published on 18 September 1979. We concluded at that time that the brigade probably has a strength of some 2,600 men and that we had insufficient evidence to determine its mission.

Comments and queries regarding this memorandum are welcome. They may be directed to [REDACTED] Deputy Director of Strategic Research, telephone [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. This memorandum has been coordinated within CIA and reviewed by representatives of the Department of State, National Security Agency, Army, and Marine Corps.

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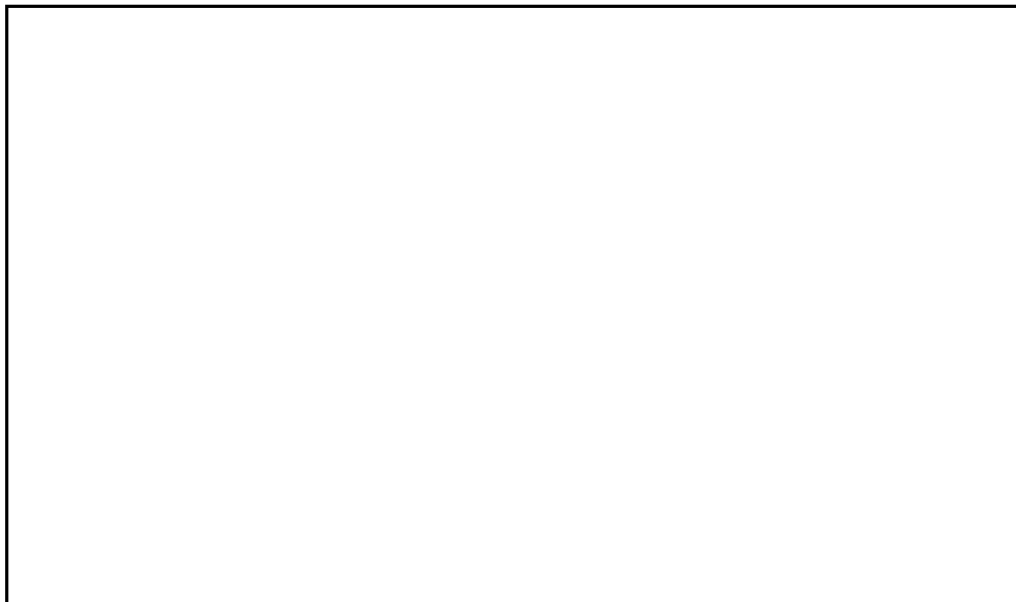
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We believe additional effort is necessary to resolve uncertainties about the brigade, its mission, and its present and future status. Such effort will probably require a commitment of additional analytical resources. We recommend that the following be undertaken in addition to efforts already under way:



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These efforts might permit a greater understanding of the relationship of the brigade to the Cuban armed forces and consequently could shed light on the current mission of the Soviet unit. We cannot be certain that this research effort will permit definitive conclusions about the brigade. We do believe, however, that firm conclusions will not be possible unless the effort is undertaken.

1b. *How firm can we now be on the Cuban order of battle?*

The Office of Political Analysis' Cuban Analytical Center is currently overseeing an interagency study which is synthesizing intelligence from [REDACTED] overhead [REDACTED]

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photography on the Cuban order of battle. Although the study will not be completed until March, preliminary findings suggest that major qualitative and quantitative revisions will be made in estimates of the Cuban order of battle. These continuing changes in the Cuban order of battle took place well before September, but the increased collection and analytic effort since the summer has enabled us to identify them.

*2. What indicators are we presently using to track Soviet military activities in Cuba?*

  
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*2a. Are there alternative indicators that we should consider developing?*

  
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*3. Can we go back and review our assumptions in September and verify if they are still valid?*

The NIO/USSR will schedule a meeting in early March at which evidence concerning the brigade will be reviewed and at which time the validity of our earlier assumptions will be reexamined. Except for our efforts on the Cuban order of battle, we do not believe that there has been sufficient new information to warrant an in-depth review of the conclusions we reached in September.

  
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3a. *If not, what has changed and what does this mean for our analysis?*

There have been no changes that would affect our previous conclusions. (See question 5.)

4. *What does consumer reaction to our work in September and to the subsequent support we provided tell us about what decisionmakers want us to track for them on (a) the Soviet presence in Cuba and (b) the Soviet-Cuban military relationship?*

There continues to be high-level policy and political concern about the Soviet brigade in Cuba. The questions concerning the memoranda on the status of the Soviet brigade (which covered the period from 1 October through 20 November 1979) that were sent to the Secretary of State and other policy level consumers, and intelligence

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interest in the subject. Consumers want to be kept apprised of any significant change in the size, composition, and activities of the Soviet brigade.

As attention is directed toward Soviet activities in the Third World, the Soviet-Cuban military relationship will attract increasing interest, and we should monitor it closely. Consumers clearly want to be apprised of any change in their partnership. Specifically, we believe that they want to know about the delivery of weapons to Cuba--particularly new systems such as MIG-23 Floggers and submarines--and whether Cuban military involvement abroad is expanding.

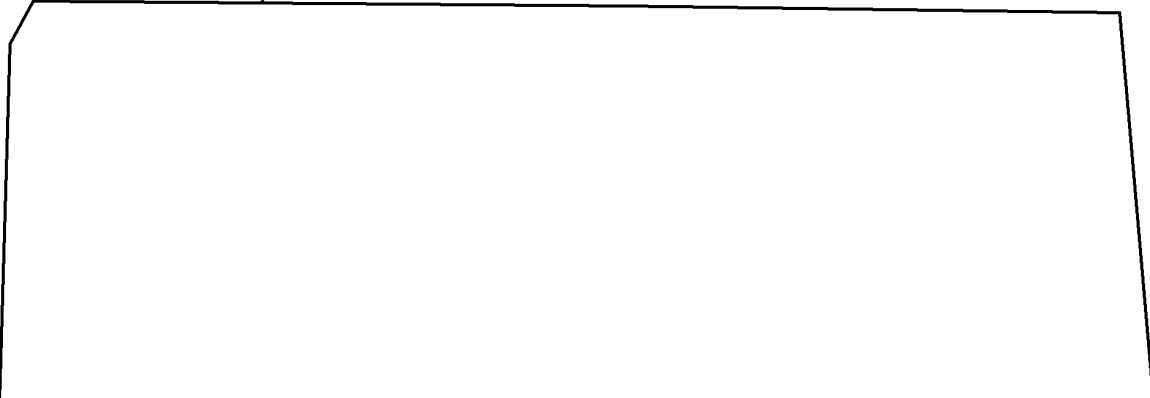
5. *What has been the pattern of activity of the brigade since September?*

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[REDACTED] photographic intelligence collection effort against the Soviet brigade in Cuba indicates that the unit has maintained a low profile

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Satellite photography of Santiago de Las Vegas showed that the Soviets maintained a small tent camp there [redacted] and a review of previous imagery showed that the Soviets had set up a similar tent camp at the same location [redacted]

[redacted] Inasmuch as the Soviets typically establish such bivouacs at various garrisons to process newly arrived personnel during the semiannual rotation of troops, this information leads us to believe that Soviet forces in Cuba are included in the troop rotation.

Satellite photography also provided data to confirm some of our earlier estimates of the organization of the brigade. Coverage of Santiago de Las Vegas [redacted] identified a battery of D-30 122-mm howitzers there for the first time. Inasmuch as a battery of D-30s was previously observed at Lourdes, where one of the brigade's three motorized rifle battalions is garrisoned, this information indicates that the brigade does not have a howitzer battalion per se, but that each maneuver battalion has its own howitzer battery.

5a. *What have the Soviets said about it?*

Following the reactions to the President's speech on 1 October the Soviets have not made any significant statements about the brigade issue. President Brezhnev referred to it only obliquely in his last major address, that of 6 October in Berlin, when he spoke of "nonexistent, invented" situations intended to whip up military



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preparations. The issue did not figure in subsequent leadership pronouncements on such occasions as the November anniversary.

Privately, Soviet spokesmen indicated that Moscow believed it had come out of the brigade "crisis" in pretty good order. Marshal Kulikov and other high-ranking Soviet military officers, for example, indicated to US officials at a national day reception in Moscow in early October that while the USSR would not be "humiliated" to help the United States out of a political predicament, the Soviets were hopeful the issue would blow over and that it would not harm SALT prospects.

*5b. What do we infer from such activities?*

The apparent dearth of activity by the brigade and the lack of significant Soviet statements about it led us to believe the Soviets had adopted a low profile because of US sensitivities to their activities in Cuba. This conclusion is supported by the fact that in August a Soviet naval task group deployed to the Caribbean but for the first time since 1969 failed to call at any Cuban ports. Moreover, only three pairs of Soviet naval Tu-95 reconnaissance aircraft landed in Cuba last year, whereas 11 Tu-95 pairs went to Cuba in 1978. The three deployments took place in March, April, and May--prior to the brigade issue.

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The Soviets may now be less concerned with US sensitivities about their activities in Cuba, however.

the Soviets are proceeding with new deliveries of military equipment, which include a second F-class submarine, two patrol boats, and several MIG-21 fighters.

*5c. In looking at the issue again, what signals do we think the Soviets are sending us about the status of the brigade?*

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[REDACTED]  
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We believe the Soviets are communicating that they have no intention of altering the composition or reducing the size of the brigade.

The Soviets accepted the President's statement on 1 October as indicating the United States wanted the brigade defused as an issue in US-Soviet relations. By muting their own references to the subject thereafter, they indicated they consider it buried. At the same time, they are sensitized to US concerns in the area. It is too early to tell whether the reduction of Tu-95 and naval deployments to Cuba is related to the issue.

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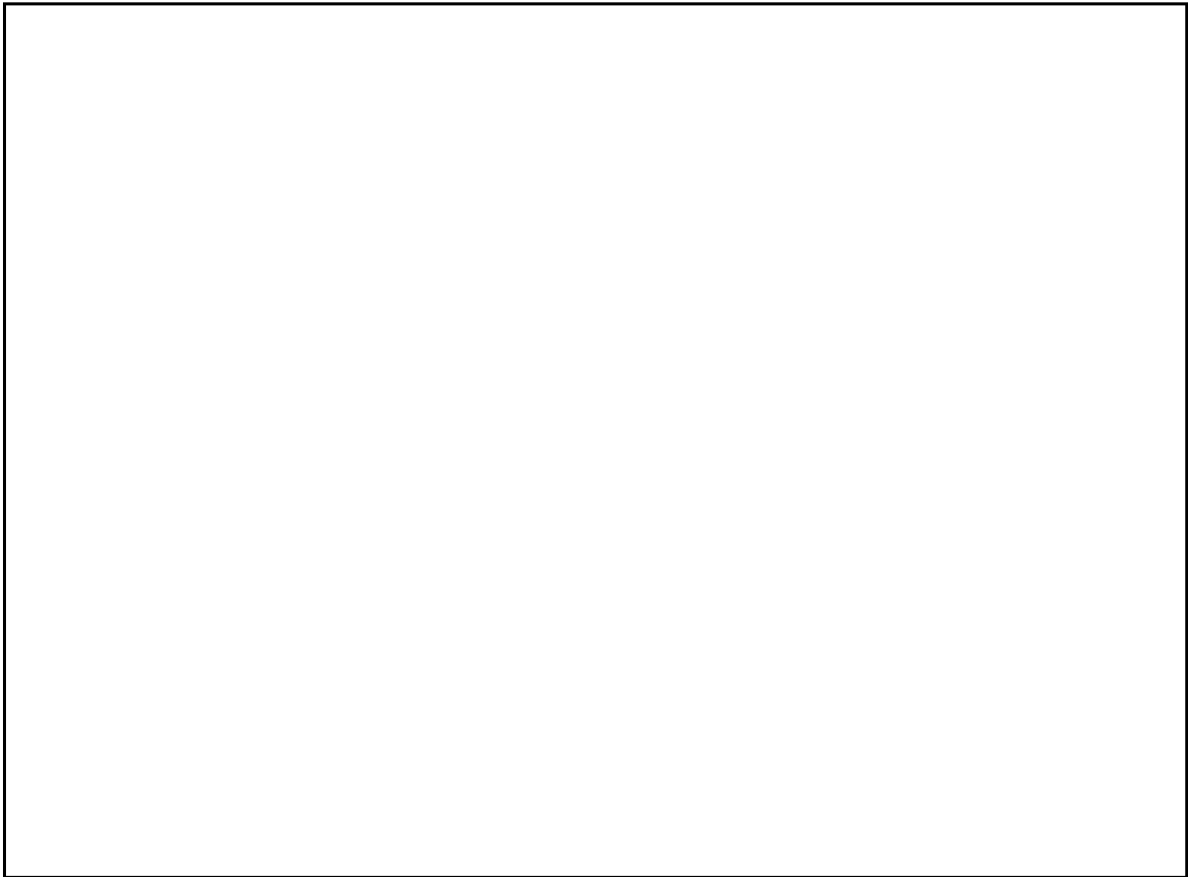
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7. *What level of collection, frequency of collection and production do we now maintain on the brigade?*

The production of finished intelligence on the brigade is keyed to the receipt of significant new information on Soviet activities in Cuba.

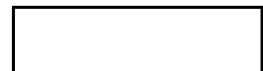
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The level and frequency of intelligence collection is as follows:



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8. *How are the efforts of each agency coordinated and integrated into a Community strategy?*

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The NIO/USSR is overseeing Community efforts on the Soviet brigade. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] He is planning to convene an interagency meeting about the first of March to assess the situation.

8a. *Is there sufficient interaction among the analysts to expose blind spots and thrash out alternative judgments?*

The NIO/USSR continues to monitor closely intelligence concerning the brigade. No new intelligence concerning the unit has warranted meetings of analysts in the community. Should new evidence become available, the NIO/USSR will take the lead in convening a forum to exchange views on the brigade.

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4 JAN 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment

SUBJECT : Soviet Brigade in Cuba [ ]

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1. In the midst of present crises I want to make sure that we don't lose sight of the Soviet Brigade in Cuba. Its been some time since we revisited the issue, and I'd like to take part of an NFIB meeting to discuss whether we are giving the Brigade the proper attention in both collection and production. [ ]

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2. To help prepare for that discussion, I would like you to work together with Gene and Dave in preparing a paper that addresses the following:

- What is the status of military conditions in Cuba since our last look? How firm can we now be on the Brigade's size and mission, as well as on the Cuban Order of Battle?
- What indicators are we presently using to track Soviet military activities in Cuba? Are there alternative indicators that we should consider developing?
- Can we go back and review our assumptions in September and verify if they are still valid? If not what has changed and what does this mean for our analysis?
- What does consumer reaction to our work in September and to the subsequent support we provided tell us about what decisionmakers want us to track for them on (a) the Soviet presence in Cuba and (b) the Soviet-Cuban relationship?
- What has been the pattern of activity of the Brigade since September? What have the Soviets said about it? What do we infer from such activities? In looking at the issue again, what signals do we think the Soviets are sending us about the status of the Brigade?

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- [ ]
- How are the efforts of each agency coordinated and integrated into a community strategy? Is there sufficient interaction among the analysts to expose blind spots and thrash out alternative judgments? [ ]

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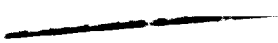
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S E C R E T

25X1 3. I'd like to discuss our response to these questions at the next regularly scheduled NFIB meeting. The discussion paper should be available by 15 January. ☐

  
STANSFIELD TURNER

cc: Director, Defense Intelligence Agency  
Director of Intelligence and Research, State

  
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